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FTI FAA TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic Vision!

The FTI Strategic Vision is to achieve an integrated suite of products, services and business practices that better meet the present and future telecommunications needs of the National Airspace System (NAS) in the 21st century.

Who?

The FTI Contract was awarded to Harris Corporation on July 15, 2002. Acting as the FTI systems integrator and prime contractor, Harris is leading a team of top telecommunications companies consisting of BellSouth Corporation, Qwest Communications, SBC Communications, Sprint, and Verizon Communications. Over the next decade, the Harris FTI Team in partnership with the FAA will incrementally replace systems that currently comprise FAA's operational networks. The FTI contract is a performance-based services contract consisting of a 5-year base with options that could extend the period of performance to a total of 15 years.

What?

The FTI Program will introduce managed change in both network services and business processes. FTI will acquire a wide range of contractor provided Service Delivery Points (SDP) to SDP telecommunications services, hosted on a common physical infrastructure with an integrated network management system.

Connect How?

In the FTI Program, we believe that connecting with our stakeholders is key to our success! Whether it's developing brochures, designing briefings or guest speaking at seminars, we're committed to effectively communicating with our customers throughout every step of the FTI transition. Working groups are already addressing the Regions' many technical, business and operational requirements, and stakeholders are finding useful information on our FTI web site. The FTI Program Office is connecting with internal and external customers to ensure a seamless transition and implementation.

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the objective of the FTI Program?

The objective of the FTI Program is to provide commercial services capable of meeting the present and future telecommunications needs of the FAA. FTI offers comprehensive, performance-based telecommunications services that provide Service Delivery Point (SDP) to SDP telecommunications services for voice, data and video operational traffic. Commercially available telecommunications services will be acquired, operated and maintained by the prime contractor, Harris Corporation. FTI replaces the FAA-owned multiplexing and switching networks, as well as telecommunications services currently leased from multiple providers.

2. How will the transition from FAA owned and leased systems happen?

The transition strategy is centered on moving to FTI as quickly and efficiently as possible, while continuing services at their required performance level. Special emphasis will be placed on minimizing disruptions at FAA facilities. A final strategy and Master Transition Plan, defining specific activities, is currently being developed by the FAA and Harris.

3. What is the transition schedule?

Transition to FTI will be completed in three phases. The build-out will begin with the ARTCCs, followed by large sites, medium sites and then small/remote sites.

4. Will the NAS become 100% digital under FTI?

Digital technology offers many cost, performance and flexibility advantages over analog technology. FTI will utilize digital technology to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the resulting cost/benefit. However, digital capability is not available today on the telecommunications access segment (the "last mile") at many FAA remote facilities. While this situation is certain to improve over the 15-year life of FTI as the local telecommunications service providers build out their networks, it is likely that there will always be some FAA sites in the most remote locations (e.g., the "mountain top") that will not have digital access. In summary, as FTI evolves over its 15-year life cycle, the NAS telecommunications infrastructure will utilize more and more digital technology and may approach fully digital. But it is unlikely to reach 100%.

5. What systems will FTI replace?

FTI will replace the FAA-owned multiplexing and switching networks, as well as telecommunications services currently leased from multiple providers. Over time, FTI will replace LINCS, DMN Network, NADIN II, FAATSAT, BWM, and FTS2001. RCL and LDRCL are within scope of FTI, but will be subject to further business case analysis.

6. Who will FTI services support?

FTI services will primarily support the FAA, DoD, and the United States Coast Guard. FTI will support users at other US Government facilities, including foreign ATC facilities, Air Carriers, and in foreign locations where the FAA mission must be supported.

7. How will FTI integrate into the FAA's NAS Infrastructure Management System (NIMS)?

There are two NMO interfaces, the User Interface and the Automated Interface. The User Interface will provide the FAA access to NMO information using the Internet Protocol suite. The Automated Interface will be developed to interface with NIMS or a similar system.

8. Who will fix equipment outages at air traffic facilities?

All equipment associated with FTI that is located at FAA facilities will be owned and maintained by Harris Corporation, the FTI contractor. Consistent with the leased services nature of FTI, Harris will be responsible for monitoring the performance of their equipment and associated telecommunications services, and for performing all necessary repairs when outages or other performance anomalies occur.

9. What type of security does FTI provide?

FTI provides telecommunications backbone network security services for voice, video and data. There are nine different security levels for users to choose from, starting with basic confidentiality and integrity provided for all services, and continuing through enhanced features such as encryption and Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).

10. How does FTI compare to LINCS?

FTI provides "functional equivalents" of all the different types of telecommunications services that are currently provided by LINCS. By functional equivalents, we mean that the user (or user's system) should not be able to discern a functional difference or performance degradation, even though the underlying technology may be different. FTI will also provide other services not currently provided by LINCS.

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